

**LEGISLATIVE SERVICES AGENCY  
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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

**LS 7344**

**BILL NUMBER:** HB 1194

**NOTE PREPARED:** Jan 8, 2004

**BILL AMENDED:**

**SUBJECT:** Child Abuse Reporting.

**FIRST AUTHOR:** Rep. Avery

**FIRST SPONSOR:**

**BILL STATUS:** As Introduced

**FUNDS AFFECTED:** ☒ **GENERAL**  
**DEDICATED**  
☒ **FEDERAL**

**IMPACT:** State & Local

**Summary of Legislation:** This bill requires the local child protection service (CPS) to conduct in-home visits at least once every 30 days to ensure compliance with a: (1) voluntary services referral agreement; or (2) program of informal adjustment. The bill provides that a CPS child abuse or neglect report may conclude that abuse or neglect is indicated. (Current law allows only substantiated and unsubstantiated findings.) It provides that a child is a Child in Need of Services if the child's physical or mental condition is impaired or endangered. (Current law provides that a child is a Child in Need of Services if the child's physical or mental condition is seriously impaired or seriously endangered.)

**Effective Date:** July 1, 2004.

**Explanation of State Expenditures:** This bill has two separate provisions. It: (1) requires CPS to conduct in-home visits at least once every 30 days for voluntary services referral agreements and a program of informal adjustment; and (2) provides that a child is a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) if the child's physical or mental condition is impaired or endangered.

(1) This provision will not have a fiscal impact. Current FSSA policies require a Family Case Manager to visit voluntary service referral agreement participants at least once each month at their residence; informal adjustment participants must be visited once every 60 days. Informal adjustments may, however, specify that a child be seen more often. Furthermore, services provided are often home-based services. As a result, case managers oftentimes visit the participant more frequently than every 30 days. It is assumed that case managers can incorporate the requirement of this bill into their current workload.

(2) This provision may increase the total number of CHINS cases. Under current practice an order of the court decides whether a child is a CHINS. It is unclear as to whether a change from “child’s physical or mental condition is seriously impaired or seriously endangered” to “impaired or endangered” will increase total caseload. If this change increases the number of CHINS cases, state expenditures will increase. FSSA estimates that the current annual cost of a CHINS case is approximately \$14,451 per child. Total cost is dependent upon the number of children referred for a CHINS determination.

Out-of-home placements and services to CHINS are funded by the local county Family and Children’s Fund. Certain out-of-home placements may be matched with federal IV-E funds, and CHINS are eligible for Medicaid services. Child Welfare Caseworkers and other staff of the local Offices of Family and Children are state employees. Additions to the number of children being supervised by the county Offices of Family and Children may result in the need for additional staff.

*Background:* In CY 2002 total CHINS expenditures were \$195.6 M for 13,500 children.

**Explanation of State Revenues:**

**Explanation of Local Expenditures:** *County Office of Family and Children, Court with Juvenile Jurisdiction, and County Prosecutor:* The caseloads of the county Office of Family and Children, court with juvenile jurisdiction, and county prosecutor may increase. This increase in caseload and associated costs is unknown and contingent upon judicial action. FSSA estimates the average cost of providing services for a CHINS for CY 2002 to be approximately \$14,451 per year. The cost for a child found to be a CHINS under this bill may be lower than this estimate. Out-of-home placements and services to CHINS are primarily funded by the local county Family and Children’s Fund. Certain out-of-home placements may be matched with federal IV-E funds, and CHINS are eligible for Medicaid services.

**Explanation of Local Revenues:**

**State Agencies Affected:** FSSA.

**Local Agencies Affected:** County Offices of Family and Children, County Prosecuting Attorneys, and Courts with Juvenile Jurisdiction.

**Information Sources:** Jane Bisbee, Family and Social Services Administration.

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